



# Utah State Courts

## JUVENILE COURT REPORT CARD TO THE COMMUNITY 2016

When citizens are asked what they would like the juvenile justice system to accomplish, the message is clear. Citizens expect the juvenile justice system to further community safety, hold youth offenders accountable, and protect the constitutional rights of juveniles, while at the same time providing justice to victims. They also expect juvenile offenders to stop criminal behavior and become responsible and productive citizens.

Taxpayers invest significant resources in the juvenile justice system and should expect a sound return on this investment. The purpose of this report card is to provide taxpayers with an update on how Utah's juvenile justice system is performing. The Juvenile Court has established benchmarks, which are listed in this report, to inform the community on its progress in furthering safety, restoring justice for victims, and reducing the risk of re-offending.

The Juvenile Court can and should be held accountable for its performance on these measures. Through the sound use of tax dollars and the involvement of the community, greater public safety can be achieved. Working together we can build a safer and more just community.

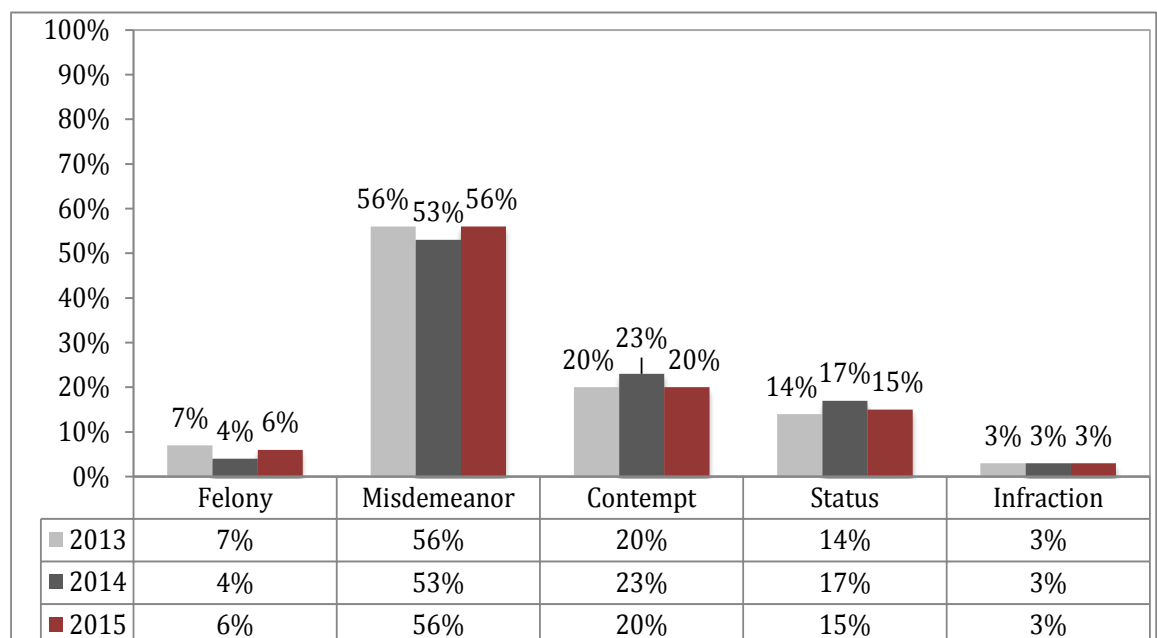
# DELINQUENCY REFERRALS



Delinquency referrals are an important measure of juvenile crime. When a juvenile commits an offense in the community, he or she may be referred to the Juvenile Court by a number of different agencies, such as the local police department or school. The type of crime determines the severity of the referral to the Juvenile Court.

There are five major severity categories for delinquency referrals: felonies, misdemeanors, contempt of court, status, and infraction. Felony-level offenses, such as burglary or robbery, are the most severe. These offenses are defined as those punishable with more than one year in prison, if committed by an adult. Misdemeanor-level offenses, such as theft or shoplifting, are less severe offenses that would be punishable with up to one year in jail and/or a fine, if committed by an adult. Status offenses, such as truancy or tobacco possession, are offenses that would not be a violation of the law but for the age of the offender. Infractions, such as disorderly conduct or criminal trespass, are lesser offenses that are not punishable by imprisonment. Certain traffic offenses are also referred to the Juvenile Court when committed by a juvenile.

Most delinquency cases referred to the Juvenile Court in 2015 were misdemeanor offenses or contempt offenses. Misdemeanor offenses accounted for 56 percent of delinquency referrals, and contempt offenses accounted for 20 percent of delinquency referrals. Felonies, the most severe type of offense, accounted for 6 percent of delinquency referrals, while infractions accounted for 3 percent of total referrals for the third year in a row.

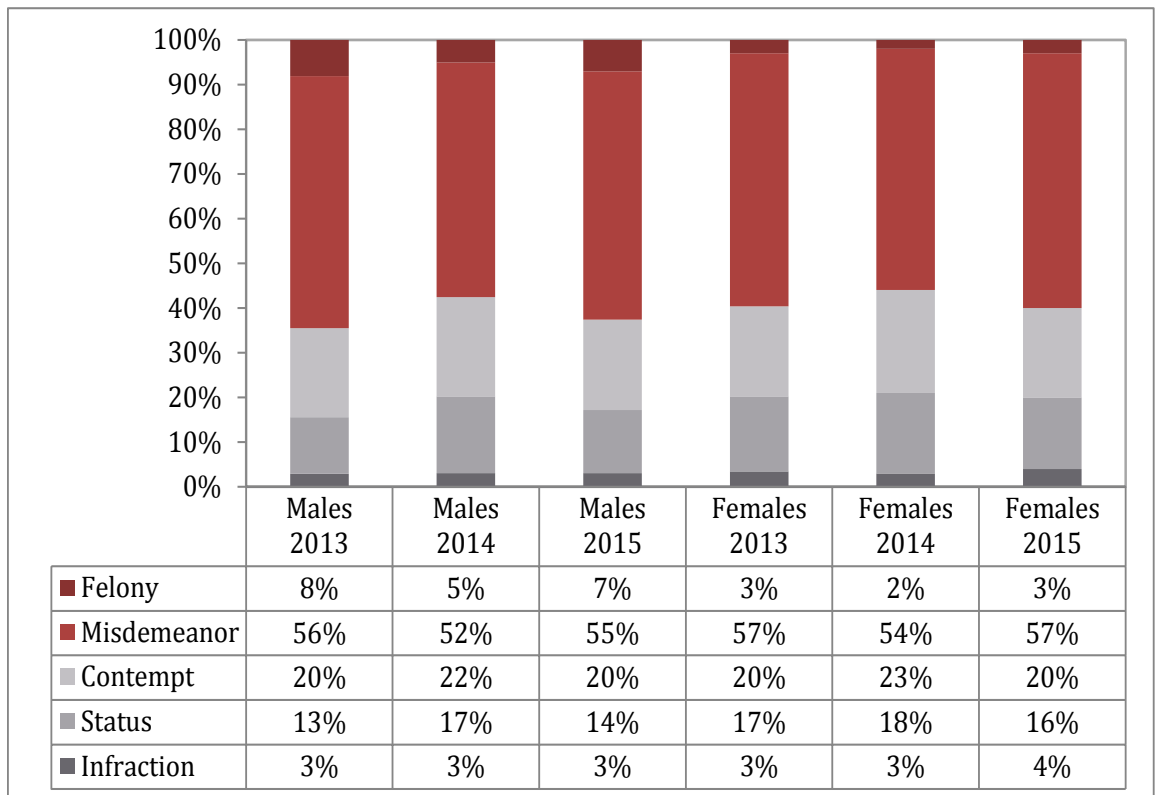


Delinquency referral rates vary for male and female juveniles. For example, in 2015 there was a higher percentage of felony offense referrals for males than there were for females. While 7 percent of referrals for males were for felony offenses, 3 percent of female referrals were for felony offenses. In contrast, there was a higher percentage of status offense referrals for females than there were for males. Sixteen percent of referrals for females were for status offenses while 14 percent of referrals for males were for status offenses.

When examining differences between 2014 and 2015 for males, the percentage of referrals for status offenses decreased and the percentage of referrals for misdemeanor offenses increased. For females, the percentage of referrals for misdemeanors also increased, and the percentage of contempt referrals decreased 3 percent between 2014 and 2015.

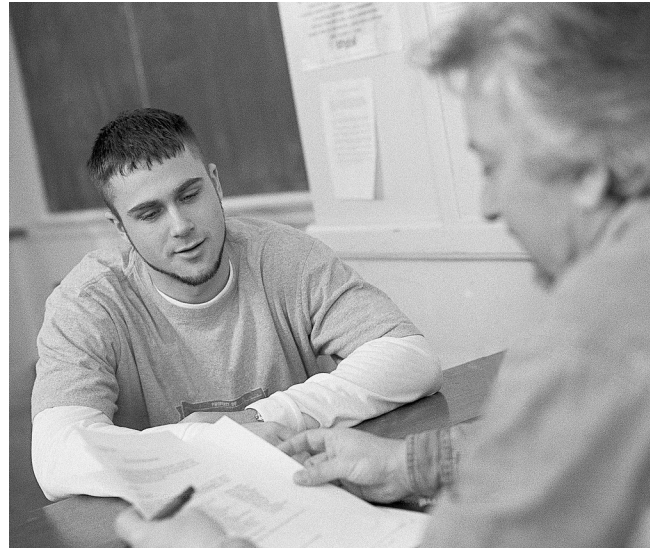


### DELINQUENCY REFERRALS BY GENDER



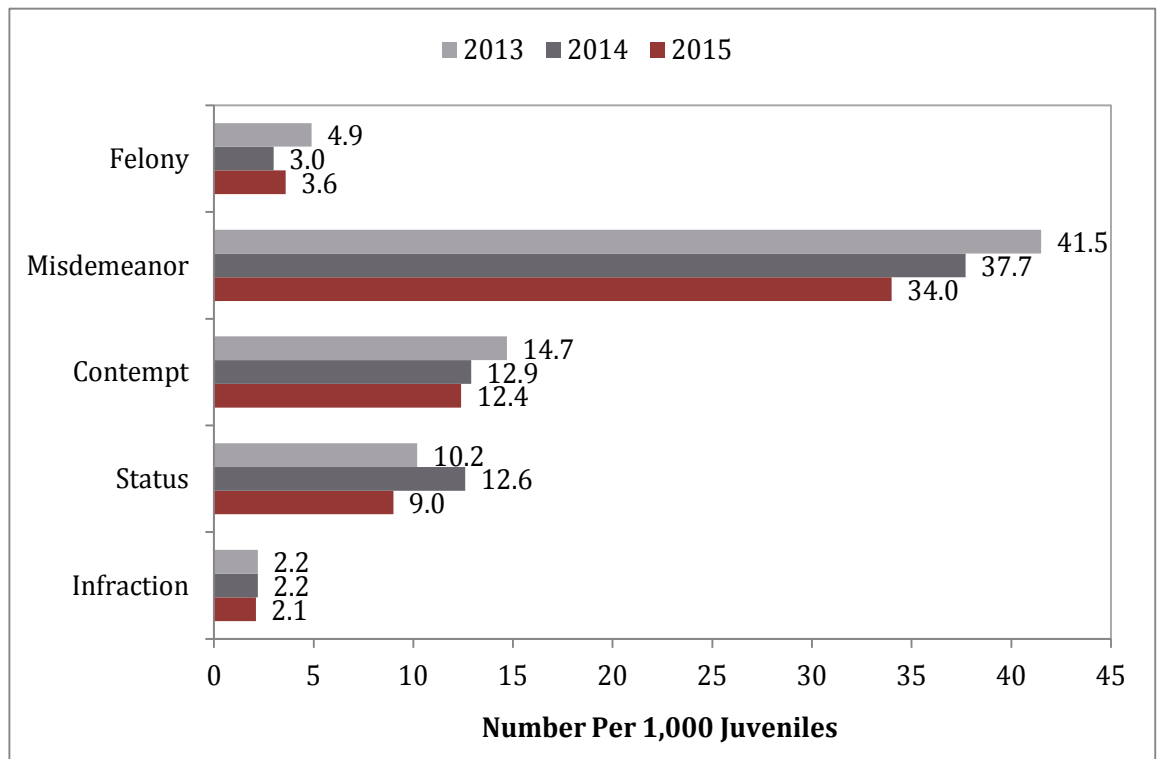
# JUVENILE CRIME

Another key indicator of juvenile delinquency is the per capita rate of delinquency referrals. The per capita referral rate examines the number of delinquency referrals for youth 10 to 17 years of age per 1,000 individuals of the Utah population of the same age range. This measure compares juvenile crime referral trends across years while controlling for changes in the juvenile population size.



The per capita rate of felony referrals in 2015 was 3.6 per 1,000 youth, which was higher than the rate in 2014 of 3.0 felony referrals per 1,000 youth. The per capita rate of misdemeanor, contempt, status, and infraction referrals all declined between 2014 and 2015. While infractions only decreased from 2.2 to 2.1 referrals per 1,000, misdemeanor referrals had a much greater decrease. Misdemeanors decreased from 37.7 referrals per 1,000 in 2014 to 34.0 referrals per 1,000 in 2015. Similarly, status referrals decreased from 12.6 referrals per 1,000 in 2014 to 9.0 referrals per 1,000 in 2015.

PER CAPITA REFERRAL RATES

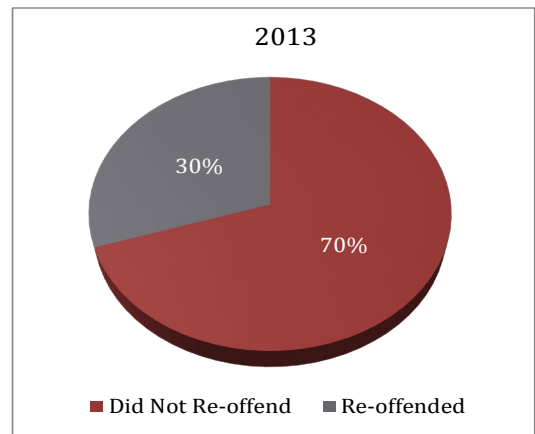


# LAW ABIDING BEHAVIOR

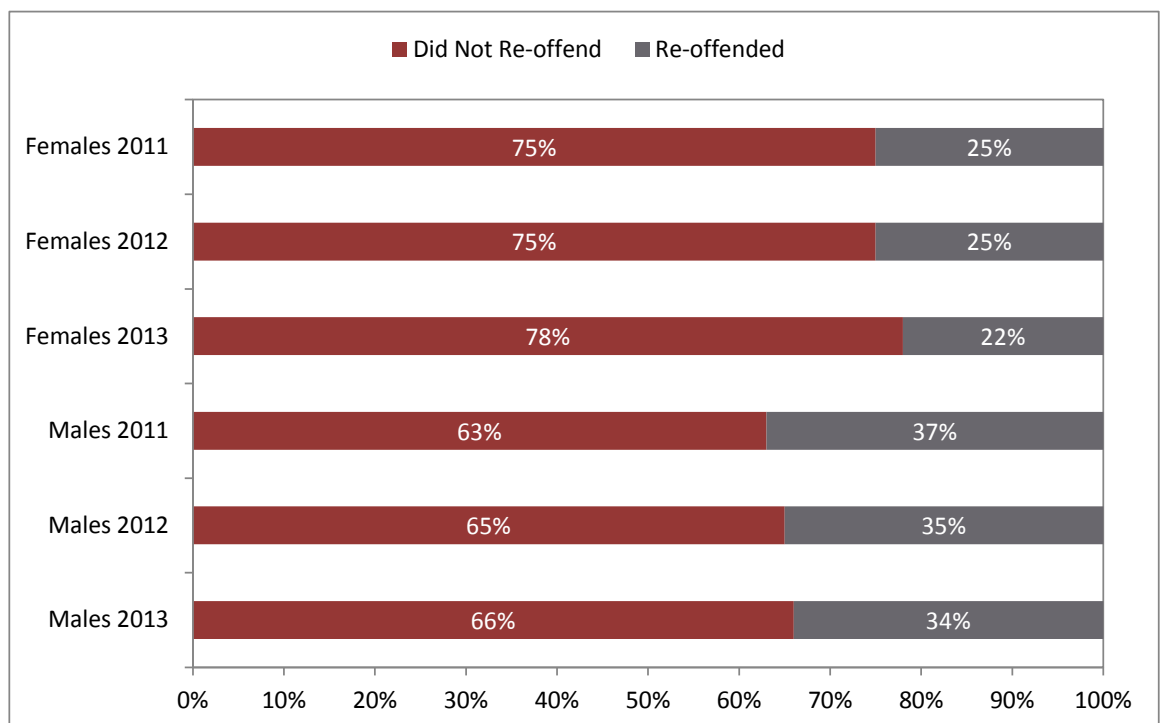
Whether or not a youth re-offends after being involved with the Juvenile Court is a valuable gauge of juvenile crime. In 2012, 67 percent of youth involved with the juvenile court for a misdemeanor or a felony did not reoffend. In 2013, this percentage increased to 70% of youth, while 30% of youth reoffended within 1 year of their original offense.

Females reoffended at lower rates than males in 2013. Twenty-two percent of females, compared with 34 percent of males, reoffended. This was 3% lower than the previous two years for females. Males have declined in their reoffense rates over the last 3 years starting at 37% in 2011 and declining 3% over the next 2 years.

Felony-level and misdemeanor-level findings or admissions of guilt in 2013 were used as the baseline for this measure. Reoffense was defined as a new felony- or misdemeanor-level finding, or admission of guilt, within one year of the original adjudication date. An additional one year follow-up period was required for the processing and adjudication of all new offenses occurring within the follow-up period. Contempts were not included in this measure.



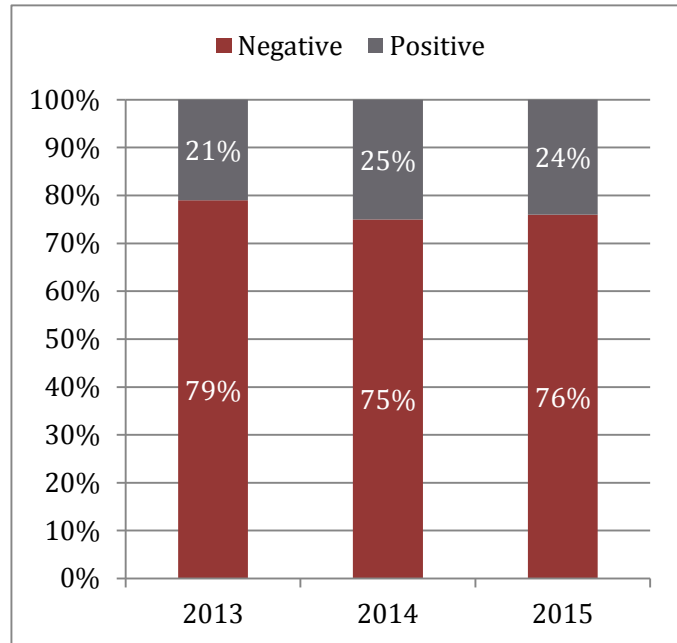
## REOFFENSE RATES BY GENDER



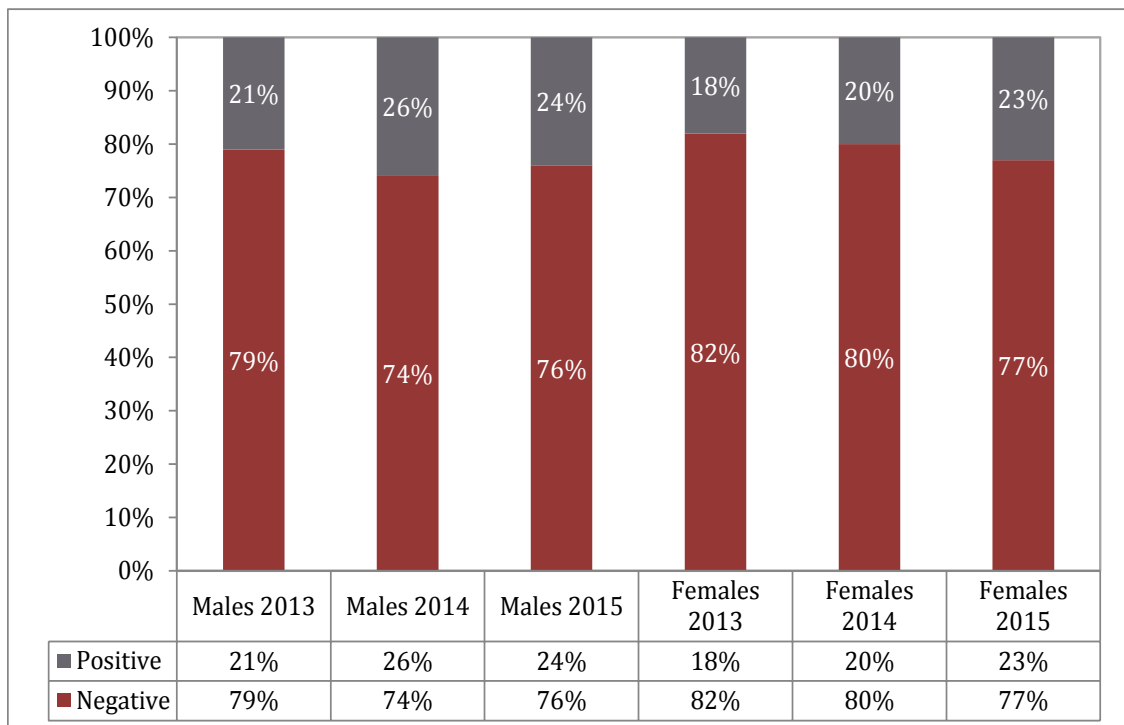
# DRUG TESTING

A juvenile offender's resistance to drug use helps the court determine the progress these youth are making toward law abiding behavior. In 2015, 24 percent of drug test results were positive and 76 percent were negative. This was higher than the rate of positive drug tests in 2013 when 21 percent of drug tests came back positive, but slightly lower than 2014 when 25 percent of drug tests were positive.

Males tested positive at a slightly higher rate than females in 2015. The graph below shows that 77 percent of drug test results for females were negative and 76 percent of drug test results for males were negative. From 2014 to 2015, the percentage of positive drug tests increased by three percent for females and decreased by two percent for males. While there hasn't been a consistent trend over the past 3 years for males, the percentage of positive drug tests for females has increased from 2013 to 2015.



**DRUG TEST RESULTS BY GENDER**



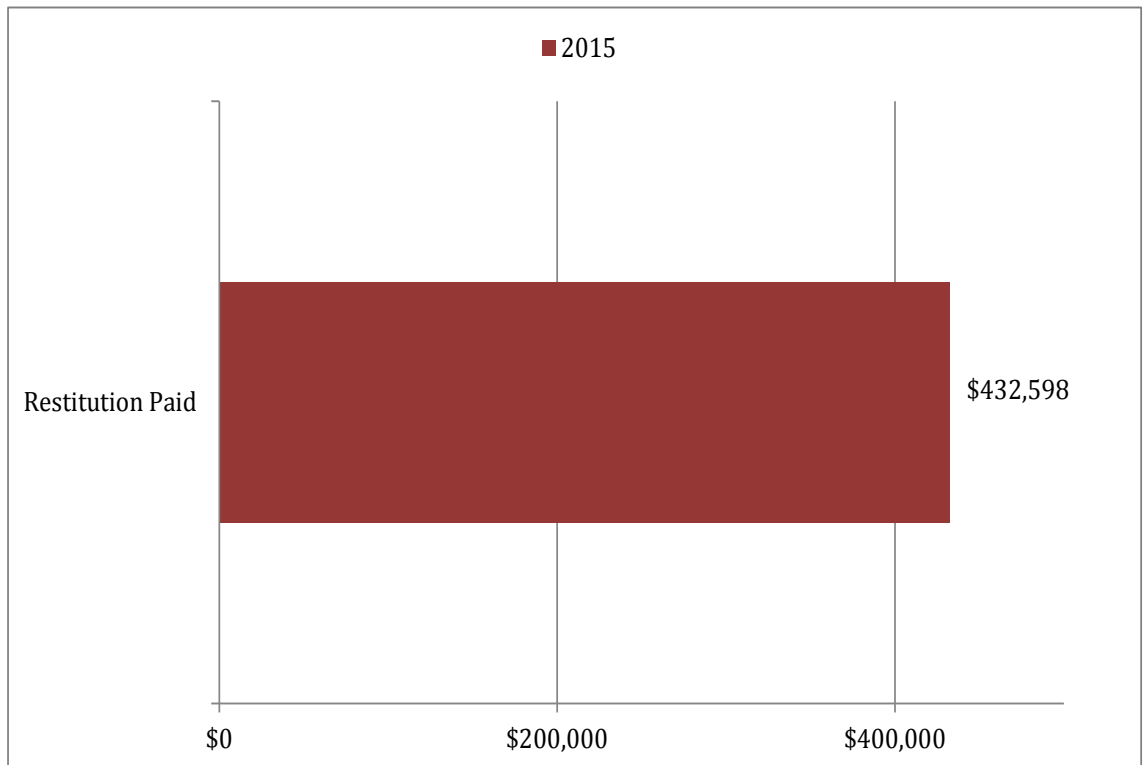
# RESTITUTION PAID

An important aspect of holding juvenile offenders responsible and providing justice to individuals harmed by crime is the payment of restitution to victims. The payment of restitution is a priority that takes precedence over the payment of all other types of fees or fines ordered by the Juvenile Court.

In 2015, juvenile offenders paid more than \$432,000 in restitution to the victims they had harmed. To find out more about the payment of restitution, fines, and fees, please visit our website at [www.utcourts.gov/courtools/](http://www.utcourts.gov/courtools/) and click on the Juvenile Court restitution, fines and fees tab.



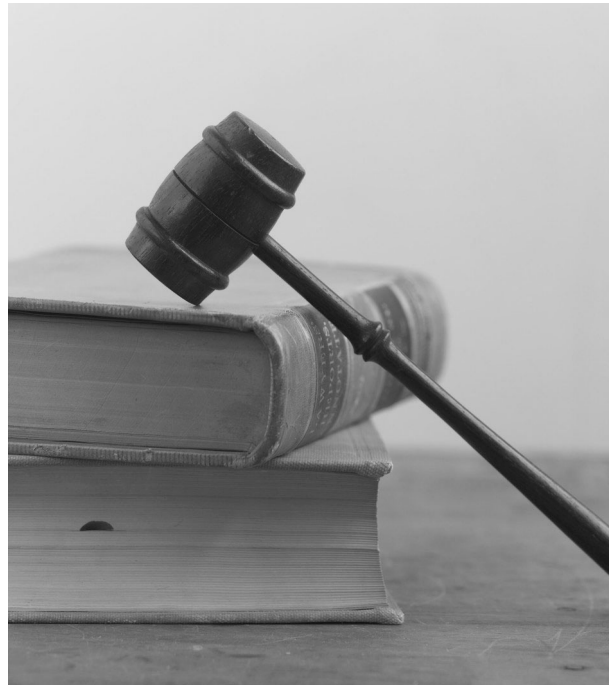
## RESTITUTION PAID



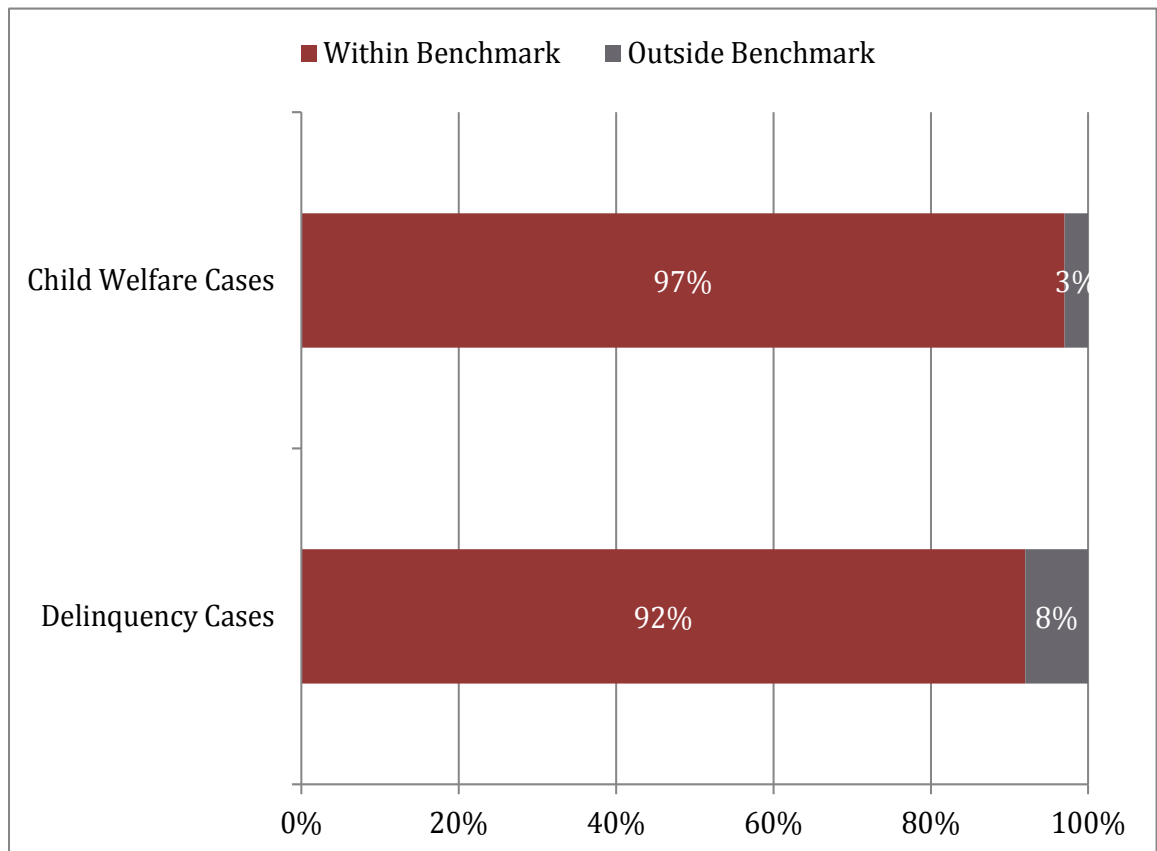
# TIMELINESS OF CASES

Resolving cases in a timely manner is an important measure of the Juvenile Court's efficiency and effectiveness. During 2015, 92 percent of delinquency cases were adjudicated within 45 days of the first hearing, meeting the timeliness benchmark for delinquency cases.

In addition to delinquency cases, the Juvenile Court also hears and resolves child welfare cases, which involve children who have been abused or neglected. During 2015, 97 percent of child welfare cases were adjudicated within 60 days of the shelter hearing, meeting the timeliness benchmark for child welfare cases.



TIMELINESS OF CASES





*A safe home and safe community for all*



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